

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 146770
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SUBJECT YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER
ANTI-YOUSLAV TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN U.S.

REF: (A) USUN 1973, (B) STATE 143134 (NOTAL)

1. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR BELOVSKI CALLED ON DIRECTOR OF
EUR/EE ON JUNE 22 TO REGISTER HIS GOVERNMENT'S CONCERNS
OVER THE JUNE 16 INCIDENT AT THE YUGOSLAV MISSION IN NEW
YORK CITY, THE JUNE 19 MURDER AND ITS AFTERMATH IN CHICAGO,
AND THE GENERAL STATE OF ANTI-YUGOSLAV ACTIVITY IN THE U.S.
BELOVSKI WAS ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR MATIC.
GENERAL TONE OF BELOVSKI'S PRESENTATION WAS MODERATE AND
LOW-KEY, BUT HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 146770

TO CALL AND CONTRASTED HIS OWN GENERALLY "BALANCED" VIEW
OF EVENTS WITH THE STRONG CONCERN OF OFFICIALS IN BELGRADE.
IN A THEME THAT WAS REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE HOUR
AND A HALF MEETING, BELOVSKI REFERRED TO THE UP-BEAT STATE
OF BILATERAL RELATIONS WHICH PREVAILS FOLLOWING THE MONDALE
VISIT AND THE DANGER THAT GROUPS OF CROATIAN AND SERBIAN
TERRORISTS COULD REVERSE THE PROGRESS MADE. HE ALSO RE-
FERRED TO ASSURANCES WHICH THE VICE PRESIDENT HAD MADE IN
BELGRADE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD DEAL
ENERGETICALLY WITH ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERRORISM.

2. WITH REGARD TO THE NEW YORK CITY INCIDENT, BELOVSKI NOTED THAT HE WAS PLEASED THERE HAD BEEN NO ANTI-YUGOSLAV PRESS CAMPAIGN SUCH AS THAT WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE TWA HIJACKING LAST YEAR, AND HE CHARACTERIZED PRESS REPORTING ON THE ATTACK AS GENERALLY BALANCED AND FACTUAL. HE FELT THAT THE OFFICIAL GOY AND TANJUG STATEMENTS ON THE INCIDENT HAD BEEN "FAIR"--FOR WHICH HE TOOK SOME PERSONAL CREDIT--AND ADDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT COULD ALSO BE SO CHARACTERIZED. NEVERTHELESS BELOVSKI HAD SOME POINTED QUESTIONS. WHERE WAS THE BREAKDOWN ON THE U.S. SIDE IN ACTING ON THE WARNING WHICH THE YUGOSLAVS HAD GIVEN US? DIDN'T WE TAKE THE THREAT SERIOUSLY? OR WERE WE ASLEEP? ANDREWS POINTED OUT THAT THE "WARNING" HAD ONLY BEEN A GENERAL STATEMENT OF CONCERN, AND THAT PETKOVIC HAD MERELY TOLD ANDREWS THAT THERE WAS AN INCREASED STATE OF ALERT AT ALL THE YUGOSLAV MISSIONS IN THE U.S. (MOREOVER, PETKOVIC HAD SPECIFICALLY CITED EUROPE RATHER THAN THE U.S. AS THE LIKELY AREA FOR TROUBLE.) BELOVSKI ALSO ASKED WHY THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE HAD NOT GONE "DEEPER" INTO THE INCIDENT AND APPREHENDED OTHERS, BEYOND THE ORIGINAL THREE. ANDREWS NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE SO FAR WHICH POINTED TO CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 146770

INVOLVEMENT BY OTHERS, BUT THE POLICE WERE STILL INVESTIGATING.

3. BELOVSKI ALSO REFERRED TO THE OTHER RECENT PROVOCATION INVOLVING YUGOSLAV MISSION EMPLOYEES (REF A) AND ASKED WHY THE THREE MEN INVOLVED HAD BEEN RELEASED AFTER THE POLICE HAD FIRST DETAINED THEM. WHEN ANDREWS POINTED OUT THAT THE EMPLOYEE OF THE YUGOSLAV MISSION HAD DECLINED TO PRESS CHARGES, AS THE POLICE HAD SUGGESTED, BELOVSKI RETORTED MILDLY THAT IT WAS UP TO U.S. AUTHORITIES, NOT EMBASSY PERSONNEL, TO PRESS CHARGES. ANDREWS SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THEY WITNESSED THE INCIDENT AND THEREFORE COULD NOT INITIATE THE CHARGES.

4. TURNING TO THE TENSE SITUATION PREVAILING IN CHICAGO FOLLOWING THE KASIKOVIC MURDER (REF B), BELOVSKI EXPLAINED THAT THE CONSULATE HAD RECEIVED PHONE CALLS THREATENING REVENGE AND THAT VARIOUS SERBIAN EMIGRE LEADERS WERE ATTEMPTING TO LAY THE CRIME AT THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT'S DOORSTEP, IMPLICATING EVEN CONSULATE EMPLOYEES. HE ALLEGED THAT CONGRESSMAN CRANE (REPUBLICAN-COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS) HAD AS MUCH AS ACCUSED THE UDBA OF COMPLICITY. IT WAS UP TO U.S. INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES TO ESTABLISH THAT THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT WAS IN NO WAY INVOLVED. THE CRIME WAS PROBABLY THE RESULT OF A POWER STRUGGLE WITHIN THE SERBIAN COMMUNITY, BELOVSKI SUGGESTED.

ANDREWS ASSURED BELOVSKI THAT THE CHICAGO POLICE, AND THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, WERE TAKING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES VERY SERIOUSLY; THAT THEY WERE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT DEFUSING THE TENSE SITUATION PREVAILING THERE; AND THAT THEY HAD EVEN TAKEN THE UNUSUAL STEP OF REFUSING A PERMIT FOR A DEMONSTRATION PLANNED FOR JUNE 24. BELOVSKI SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD THAT THE DEMONSTRATION HAD BEEN BANNED, AND ASKED THAT WE KEEP HIM INFORMED OF THE CHICAGO SITUATION. (COMMENT: CHICAGO POLICE OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED US THAT, CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 146770

HAVING SATISFACTORILY ACCOUNTED FOR THE ESTRANGED HUSBAND OF THE VICTIM'S GIRLFRIEND, THEY ARE PURSUING A NEW ANGLE. THE POLICE HAVE A REPORT THAT AT A SERBIAN NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL (SND) MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE IN THE SLOBODA OFFICES THE EVENING BEFORE THE MURDER A FACTIONAL ARGUMENT BROKE OUT AND THE VICTIM AND SND CHIEF UROS SEFER ORDERED A (FNU) PONOVIĆ EVICTED. THE LATTER REPORTEDLY HID SOMEWHERE IN THE BUILDING FOR A TIME AFTERWARDS AND IS NOW MISSING. POLICE DISCOUNT THE UDBA ASSASSINATION THEORY BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE CRIME: THERE WAS NO FORCED ENTRY, THE MURDER WEAPON WAS APPARENTLY PICKED UP ON THE PREMISES, AND THE KILLER SPENT AT LEAST TEN MINUTES MUTILATING THE BODIES. THERE ARE NOT THE MARK OF A PROFESSIONAL ASSASSINATION. POLICE STATEMENTS TO THIS EFFECT HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN CHICAGO NEWSPAPERS, AND THE DEPARTMENT HAS CALLED THE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT OF THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE TO REINFORCE THIS POSITION. THE POLICE WANT TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION. THEY ARE GETTING NO COOPERATION FROM THE SND LEADERSHIP, BUT MODERATES AMONG THE SERBIAN COMMUNITY ARE BEGINNING TO TRY TO CALM THINGS DOWN. THE DEPARTMENT HAS IMPRESSED ON THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, THE POLICE, AND CONGRESSMAN CRANE'S OFFICE THE NEED FOR RESTRAINT. END COMMENT.)

5. BELOVSKI ALSO STRESSED THE ATTITUDE OF NERVOUSNESS WHICH PREVAILED IN YUGOSLAV MISSIONS IN THE U.S., IN PARTICULAR IN NEW YORK CITY AND CHICAGO. IN NEW YORK THIS EXTENDED BEYOND THE MISSION AND THE CONSULATE STAFFS TO THE HUNDRED AND FIFTY OR SO TRADE REPRESENTATIVES, WHO WERE "DISGUSTED AND UNCERTAIN" ABOUT THE CLIMATE OF ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERROR. IN ORDER TO CALM THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CHICAGO CONSULATE, BELOVSKI SAID HE WAS CONSIDERING A VISIT THERE VERY SOON. ANDREWS WONDERED
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 146770

ALSO WHETHER THIS MIGHT TEND TO INCITE RATHER THAN CALM PASSIONS THERE, AND URGED BELOVSKI TO LET US KNOW HIS PLANS SO WE COULD ALERT THE CHICAGO POLICE.

6. THE JACK ANDERSON ARTICLE IN THE JUNE 14 WASHINGTON POST ON SERBIAN ORTHODOX MATTERS (POUCHED TO POSTS) WAS ALSO A TARGET OF BELOVSKI'S CONCERNS. HE EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT ABOUT ANDERSON'S USE OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AND FBI SOURCES, AS WELL AS ABOUT THE REASONS FOR RESURRECTING EVENTS FROM THE 1950S AND EARLY 1960S. ANDREWS SAID WE DID NOT INTERFERE IN CHURCH AFFAIRS IN THE U.S.

7. MENTION WAS ALSO MADE OF THE DOCUMENT WHICH SEFER OF SND ALLEGEDLY SENT TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT. ANDREWS TOLD BELOVSKI THAT HE HAD HEARD OF THE DOCUMENT BUT HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO TRACK DOWN ITS RECEIPT IN THE DEPARTMENT.

8. PERHAPS THE MAJOR POINT OF BELOVSKI'S LONG PRESENTATION CAME NEAR THE CLOSE WHEN HE REFERRED TO ACTIONS WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES HAD TAKEN TO DEAL WITH ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERRORISM. IT WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR THE U.S. TO TRY TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM THROUGH POLICE COVERAGE OF THE YUGOSLAV ESTABLISHMENTS. RATHER, HE ARGUED, THE U.S. HAD TO HIT THE SOURCE OF THIS TERRORIST ACTIVITY, THE ORGANIZATIONS WHICH NURTURED THIS CLIMATE OF VIOLENCE. IN CANADA, SWEDEN, WEST GERMANY AND BELGIUM THIS HAD BEEN DONE, WITH GREAT EFFECT, ONCE LEADERS SUCH AS BRANDT AND PALME HAD BEEN CONVINCED TO ACT. BELOVSKI CLAIMED TO UNDERSTAND AND RESPECT U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS, BUT NEVERTHELESS, WE KNEW WHO THE LEADERS WERE. AT A MINIMUM, THE U.S. AUTHORITIES SHOULD SEND A COMMUNICATION TO THESE LEADERS (TO THE "EGG HEADS") THAT VIOLENT ANTI-YUGOSLAV ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT BE TOLERATED, AND THAT THE GROUPS' ACTIONS CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 06 STATE 146770

DID NOT ACCORD WITH U.S. POLICY NOR SERVE U.S. INTERESTS. BELOVSKI THEN RETURNED TO HIS ORIGINAL THEME THAT IT WAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE NOT TO LET SUCH GROUPS UNDERMINE THE IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS; THAT SUCH INCIDENTS COULD LEAD TO A VICIOUS CIRCLE OF STATEMENTS AND COUNTERSTATEMENTS (WHICH HE WOULD NOT AGAIN BE IN A POSITION TO MODERATE); AND THAT HE HOPED THE VICE PRESIDENT'S ASSURANCES WOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO REALITY.

9. ANDREWS ASSURED BELOVSKI THAT WE, TOO, WERE CONCERNED LEST A FEW INDIVIDUALS SUCCEED IN DERAILING OUR COURSE OF IMPROVING RELATIONS. REFERRING TO THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THE SUBJECT OF ANTI-YUGOSLAV TERRORISM,

BEFORE HIS TRIP TO YUGOSLAVIA, ANDREWS NOTED THAT THERE WAS INCREASED COOPERATION ON THE PART OF THE VARIOUS

U.S., AND STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO DEAL SWIFTLY AND FORCEFULLY WITH SUCH INCIDENTS. FURTHERMORE, WE WERE PREPARED TO MAKE USE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTINUED COOPERATION FROM THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AND THE FBI. ANDREWS ALSO NOTED THAT AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER WAS PERSONALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS PROBLEM. HE ADDED THAT WE INTEND TO PROVIDE THE PROTECTION TO WHICH YUGOSLAV DIPLOMATIC ESTABLISHMENTS ARE ENTITLED. WITHIN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, ANDREWS POINTED OUT, OUR OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM WAS FOCUSING, INTER ALIA, ON THE PROBLEMS OF ANTI-YUGOSLAV ACTIVITIES AND TOOK VERY SERIOUSLY THE THREAT OF TERRORIST ACTIVITY FROM THESE GROUPS.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 07 STATE 146770

10. COMMENT: BELOVSKI, WHO HAS ASKED TO SEE THE SECRETARY WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO INJECT THE SUBJECT OF THE NEW YORK CITY AND CHICAGO INCIDENTS INTO THAT DIALOGUE. ALTHOUGH HE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING ALL THE USUAL POINTS ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF FUTURE INCIDENTS, HE TRIED TO PUT HIS PRESENTATION IN A LOW-KEY AND "CONSTRUCTIVE" MANNER, AND EVEN EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT MAKING AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER'S FIRST MONTHS MORE DIFFICULT. HE NOTED, IN THIS REGARD, THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY MADE SURE THAT "ALL DOORS, EVEN AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS", WILL BE OPEN TO THE AMBASSADOR. CHRISTOPHER

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